II

Harold Wisky

EYELESS IN GAZA

Gaza is a narrow strip extending along the Mediterranean from Israel's coast to the Sinai, which is part of Egypt. Under the Camp David Agreement negotiated by the United States, Israel returned all of the Sinai, together with all the many improvements it had put in, like functioning oil wells, to Egypt. There is where compliance with the Camp David Agreement ended, with the Israelis giving up all of that for nothing in return. Our sage calls this Israeli "imperialism." He hasn't yet gotten around to telling us how he knows this alleged Israeli imperialism visualizes expansion to the Euphrates River. Could it be that he heard what somebody was saying about the Book of Genesis?

After World War I, when perfidious Albion, having promised homelands to both Jews and Arabs in the Palestine Territory, instead established only the Arab state of Trans-Jordan and installed Abdullah, a sheik friendly to it, as King. It did not keep its word to Jews who, unlike Arabs elsewhere, did not have the prized resource of the world's greatest reservoirs of petroleum, for which Britain lusted. But it did leave for the future Jewish state almost half of the Palestine Territory it took from the Ottoman empire as its spoils of war. Along with this territory that did not become Trans-Jordan under the British flunky there was the Gaza strip. It also was outside the Jewish state when it was established in 1947.

Twenty years later, when Isreal defeated the entire Arab world and thrashed the Egyptians out of the Sinai and across the Nile, Gaza fell under its control. Under the Camp David accord, Israel returned the Sinai but Egypt refused to accept Gaza although it had controlled that area for 20 years. This is the <u>only</u> reason Israel is in Gaza today and today has the responsibility, under international law, of preserving order there and protecting all who live there from the violence and other excesses of the few who are rioting. Most of them, tragically, are boys as young as eight and ten years old who are exploited by

those who have their own objectives in mind.

Although our renowned philosopher and political scientist refers to Israel, which he describes as an imperialist state, as the "occupying power" in Gaza and what is known as the West Bank, it does not exercise jurisdiction over Gaza as part of any imperialism. It is there, unwillingly, only as the result of Egypt's abdication.

It is odd that he for weeks has avoided use of "Israel" and "Jews" in his valiant efforts to inform us because it is he who himself described this avoidance as "prejudice" when he wrote that "prejudice exists when a people are reduced to a 'they,' lumped together in a faceless clump." This was when he proclaimed that Dr. King, our preeminent disciple of nonviolence was, from his grave, a supporter of this Palestinian Arab violence.

What he calls "this uprising" came "from having their civil and religious rights trampled ... especially during the 20 years" they were "under alien occupation." There were 40, not 20, years of "alien occupation" not counting the earlier centuries of it, most recently by Turkey and then England. The people of Gaza, under Israel, enjoy more rights by far than under Egypt and earlier occupations, as reported in the paper he reads and quotes.

During the 20 years of Egypt's "alien occupation" of Gaza and Jordan's of the West Bank, there was no clamor for Palestinian independence.

Perhaps omission of the period of time when the people of Gaza had fewest rights and most abuse comes from the trouble to his "soul" and "conscience," which he says cry out for those "cut down in air raids upon Palestinian camps in Lebanon." And it is true that some, not much more than a small faction of Palestinian deaths, were from air raids that, again not wanting to tax our limited comprehension, he did not bother to tell us were in retaliation for the endless, murderous violence inflicted on those he has "clumped together," Jews, mostly the aged, women and children.

His rent soul and tortured conscience ~~from~~ by the deaths of relatively few Arabs from retaliatory air raids do not suffer from the murder of thousands by Arabs. The reported numbers range from 1,800 to 4,000, with his own paper reporting 5,000 casualties among Shiite Moslems alone, "at least 1,600 killed" and "3,600 wounded." And it is these Shiites who, in the same account had just "ended their siege of Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon after 990 days."

How the "uprising" actually began also was amply reported in all our media. It was the day after what he regards as never in the interest of his readers to know, not once in a multitude of instances, another Arab terrorist raid on Israeli civilians, by air, from Lebanon. The next day there was an auto accident in Gaza in which an Arab was killed. Those seeking to exploit the terrible conditions in Gaza to inflame a holy war against Israel spread the lie that this accident was no accident but retaliation.

His quotation of the Washington Post does not include the most modest version of the incitations throughout the period of this violence, published in the midst of his zealous efforts to inform us of the truth that he often said was being suppressed by Israeli censorship. (This "censorship," naturally enough, is what resulted in daily pictures on TV and countless stories in all the papers.) The mosques, it seems, "broadcast a call for a holy war against Israel." Other accounts state that the tirades from the mosques include "Kill the Jews!"

We can understand this without having his unique knowledge and understanding. Is this why he never once mentioned it?

Or its reporting that most of the rest of the people of Gaza live in terror, not of the police action but "of their own hotheaded youths?"

Or of the violence the younger ones threatened and visited upon whose who did not do their bidding? The threats usually worked but when they didn't, Arab violence against Arabs did.

His heart bleeds for the 40 killed and others wounded, even if it is

the direct result of the violence of their own, started and continued on their own, and one should sorrow for the suffering of any people.

But even great minds grow weary, especially if the sorrowing is late in welling up.

Thus, he has yet to sorrow for the hundreds of killed and wounded Israeli babies, children, women and older men who for decades were the victims of indiscriminate Arab bombarding of Jewish villages, villages that had to have bomb shelters even for kindergartens and schools,, until the 1967 war, which created a land barrier.

He has no tears for the countless innocent riders on Israeli buses bombed and burned by Palestinians with the innocents inside, some of whom were Arabs.

None for all the other many victims of indiscriminate Muslim terrorism that, after the 40 years of the existence of the State of Israel, has yet to yield a single constructive end and, with his wholehearted endorsement, continues today.

At one recent point Syria killed 15,000 Arabs but his cheek remains dry and he has no words of condemnation, the expectable result of his "moderation" and steadfast refusal to engage in any kind of discrimination.

The anger he feels over the deportation of nine young men he calls "leaders" when they have engaged in no political activity, only violence and incitations to violence, triggers nothing in his brilliant but weary mind. Not that the United Statess did this wholesale, not with a mere nine human beings but with boatloads after World War I, and then only on suspicion and without notification to families and loved ones.

Not the major deportations from Germany into Poland and from Poland into the USSR after World War II.

Not even the great volume of deportations in the recent past between the Islamic countries, Iran and Iraq. Millions of people mean nothing when he can weep and inveigh over nine terrorists.

Our genius is eyeless in Gaza